



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

MEETING DATE: FEBRUARY 2, 2004

ITEM NUMBER:

SUBJECT: TOWN CENTER DRIVE MASTER PLAN

DATE: JANUARY 21, 2004

FROM: DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT/PLANNING DIVISION

PRESENTATION BY: R. MICHAEL ROBINSON, PLANNING & REDEVELOPMENT MANAGER

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: R. MICHAEL ROBINSON, PLANNING &
REDEVELOPMENT MANAGER (714) 754-5610

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt attached resolution approving the Town Center Drive Master Plan, subject to conditions.

BACKGROUND:

In February 2001, City Council adopted General Plan Amendment GP-00-02 for the South Coast Plaza Town Center area bounded by Bristol Street, Sunflower Avenue, Avenue of the Arts, and the San Diego Freeway. The amendment resulted in the:

- Creation of a new "Cultural Arts Center" land use designation to more closely reflect the unique mix and intensity of land uses in the South Coast Plaza Town Center (SCPTC);
- Establishment of new floor area ratio standards to resolve the nonconforming use status of existing development, while allowing for an expansion and reconfiguration of development within the SCPTC; and
- Deletion of the portion of Town Center Drive between Park Center Drive and Avenue of the Arts from the Master Plan of Highways to facilitate vacation of this segment as a public street.

In conjunction with GP-00-02, City Council also approved Planning Action PA-00-38 to amend the SCPTC Preliminary Master Plan to reflect the above General Plan changes. Condition of approval #7 of the amended master plan requires "(I)n conjunction with any final master plan approval for development adjacent to Town Center Drive, the project applicant(s) shall prepare and submit a detailed circulation and improvement plan for Town Center Drive. The improvement plan must receive approval from the City." The applicants submitted a master plan (PA-03-01) for the Renee and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall/Henry and Susan Samueli Theater at 615 Town Center Drive, triggering the requirement for the Town Center Drive improvement plan.

At its November 10, 2003 meeting, the Planning Commission recommended City Council approve the Town Center Drive Master Plan on a 5-0 vote.

ANALYSIS:

The proposed Town Center Drive Master Plan is the result of a design charrette conducted in November 2002. The charrette participants included major stakeholders (Orange County Performing Arts Center, and South Coast Repertory), City staff from both Planning and Transportation Services Divisions, and a support consultant team. The charrette was facilitated by design staff from Cesar Pelli and Associates.

The proposed Town Center Drive Master Plan represents a concept plan for the transformation of Town Center Drive, between Park Center Drive and Avenue of the Arts, from a public street into an enhanced pedestrian plaza. The concept plan provides for vehicular drop-off and valet parking areas, a pedestrian crosswalk, and a central public plaza.

A major goal of the master plan is to create a unified "Arts Campus" through development of a significant public space, while also maintaining adequate access to existing developments north of Town Center Drive (Orange County Performing Arts Center, Center Tower, and Center Garage), and existing and future developments south of Town Center Drive (South Coast Repertory, the Renee and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall, and future cultural facility).

In addition to street improvements between Park Center Drive and Avenue of the Arts, the master plan also includes a roundabout at the current intersection of Avenue of the Arts and Town Center Drive. This is a major design feature marking the eastern edge of Theater Arts District and creating a monumental entry point into the Arts Campus. This feature, as well as all other circulation features of the master plan, have been analyzed and designed to provide safe and adequate traffic circulation within and around the Arts Campus.

Implementation of the proposed Town Center Drive Master Plan is predicated on the vacation of Town Center Drive as a public street. This action is not a part of the master plan, but will be processed as a subsequent request. Both the vacation and master plan are contingent on the provision of left-turn access from Avenue of the Arts into the Center Garage parking structure. This will require a break in the existing median and installation of a left-turn lane and the necessary signalization for safe traffic movements. Approval of this master plan has been conditioned on the successful completion of these two actions prior to implementation of the proposed improvements.

The impacts of the vacation and closure of Town Center Drive were analyzed in Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) No. 1047 for the South Coast Plaza Town Center. The traffic analysis indicated the proposed closure would have negligible impact outside of the project area. One intersection within the project area, Bristol Street and Sunflower Avenue, could be negatively impacted. An impact could occur

in the AM peak hour, with a change in intersection capacity utilization (ICU) from 0.89 to 0.95. However, this impact can be mitigated by converting the third northbound through lane to a shared through/right-turn lane. This improvement is a mitigation measure of FEIR No. 1047, and a condition of approval for the South Coast Plaza Town Center project.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

The proposed master plan improvements are the result of a significant amount of analysis and input from major stakeholders, consultants, and City staff. The proposed improvements represent a balance of design, circulation, aesthetic, and operational/functional considerations. Although a number of design alternatives were considered during the charrette process, the proposed appear to be the best design solution to these factors.

Denial of the proposed master plan and failure to vacate Town Center Drive as a public street would retain Town Center Drive in its current condition. The street would continue as a physical and visual barrier between the existing Orange County Performing Arts Center north of Town Center Drive, and the Renee and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall/Henry and Susan Samueli Theater, and the future cultural arts facility located south of Town Center Drive. This may create potential vehicular and pedestrian circulation conflicts as patrons circulate between the arts venues and related uses in the area. It would also preclude use of the street as a venue for other arts programs or public gatherings.

FISCAL REVIEW:

Fiscal review is not required.


LEGAL REVIEW:

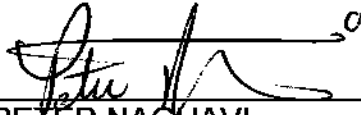
Legal review is not required.

CONCLUSION:

The Town Center Drive Master Plan proposes to transform the existing Town Center Drive right-of-way into a major public plaza to create an aesthetic and functional link between the major arts venues adjacent to Town Center Drive. The proposed improvements have been designed to provide a major public space without sacrificing access and circulation requirements.


R. MICHAEL ROBINSON
Planning & Redevelopment Manager


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PETER NAGHAVI

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South Coast Repertory Theater
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ATTACHMENTS: 1 City Council Resolution
2 Location Map
3 Town Center Drive Master Plan Concept
4 Planning Commission Minute Excerpt

File Name: 020204TCDMP

Date: 1/22/04

Time: 5 PM

ATTACHMENT 1

City Council Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. 04-

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF
COSTA MESA APPROVING THE TOWN CENTER DRIVE
MASTER PLAN.**

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COSTA MESA HEREBY RESOLVES AS
FOLLOWS:

WHEREAS, the Town Center Drive Master Plan was filed the Orange County Performing Arts Center, South Coast Repertory Theater, and C. J. Segerstrom and Sons with respect to the portion of Town Center Drive between Park Center Drive and Avenue of the Arts for the future improvement of this segment of Town Center Drive as a pedestrian-oriented public plaza linking the major arts venue within the South Coast Plaza Town Center Theater Arts District;

WHEREAS, the project has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the CEQA Guidelines, and the City environmental procedures, and Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) No. 1047 (SCH No. 200041100) which was certified on February 5, 2001;

WHEREAS, duly noticed public hearings were held on March 10 and November 10, 2003 by the Planning Commission, and on February 2, 2004 by the City Council in accordance with Section 65355 of the Government Code of the State of California, with all persons having been given the opportunity to be heard both for and against the proposed the Town Center Drive Master Plan.

BE IT RESOLVED that, based on the evidence in the record and the findings contained in Exhibit "A", the City Council hereby **APPROVES** the Town Center Drive Master Plan with respect to the property described above.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Costa Mesa City Council does hereby find and determine that adoption of this resolution is expressly predicated upon the activity as described in the staff report for the Town Center Drive Master Plan and upon applicant's compliance with each and all of the conditions contained in Exhibit "B". Any approval granted by this resolution shall be subject to review, modification or revocation if there is a material change that occurs in the operation, or if the applicant fails to comply with any of the conditions of approval.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 2nd day of February, 2004.

Mayor, Costa Mesa City Council

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM

Dep. City Clerk of the City of Costa Mesa City Attorney

STATE OF CALIFORNIA }
COUNTY OF ORANGE)ss
CITY OF COSTA MESA)

I, JULIE FOLCIK, Deputy City Clerk and ex-officio Clerk of the City Council of the City of Costa Mesa, hereby certifies that the above and foregoing Resolution No. _____ was duly and regularly passed and adopted by the said City Council at a regular meeting thereof held on the _____ day of February, 2004.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have herby set my hand and affixed the Seal of the City of Costa Mesa this _____ day of February, 2004.

Deputy City Clerk and ex-officio Clerk of the
City Council of the City of Costa Mesa

EXHIBIT "A"

FINDINGS – TOWN CENTER DRIVE MASTER PLAN

- A. The information presented substantially complies with Costa Mesa Municipal Code, as amended. The proposed project complies with Section 13-29(g)(5)(a) of the Costa Mesa Municipal Code in that the proposed project, as conditioned, meets the broader goals of the General Plan and Zoning Code by exhibiting excellence in design, site planning, integration of uses and structures and protection of the integrity of neighboring residential, cultural, and commercial development. Specifically, the project is a master plan for the future improvement of the portion of Town Center Drive between Park Center Drive and Avenue of the Arts as a pedestrian-oriented public plaza linking the major arts venues within the South Coast Plaza Town Center Theater Arts District.
- B. Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) #1047 was prepared, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act. Although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, according to the Final EIR, which reflects the independent judgment of the City of Costa Mesa, mitigation measures have been added to the project that minimize anticipated impacts to a level of insignificance where possible.

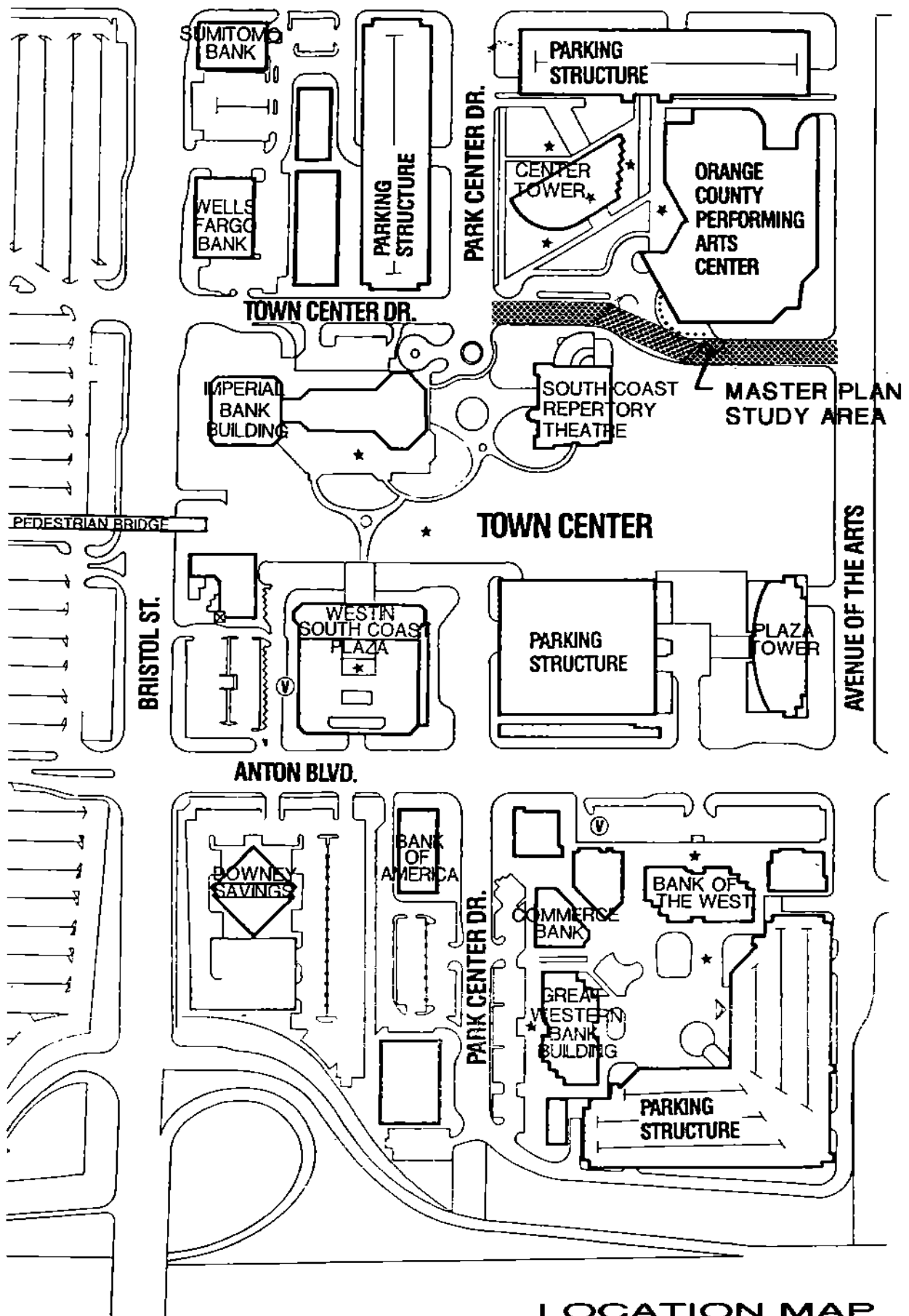
EXHIBIT "B"

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL – TOWN CENTER DRIVE MASTER PLAN

- PIng.
1. Implementation of the Town Center Drive Master Plan improvements shall not be initiated until the portion of Town Center Drive between Park Center Drive and Avenue of the Arts is vacated as a public street.
 2. Implementation of the Town Center Drive Master Plan improvements shall not be initiated until left turn access to the Center Garage parking structure is completed.

ATTACHMENT 2

Location Map



LOCATION MAP

ATTACHMENT 3

Town Center Drive Master Plan Concept

SUNFLOWER AVE

CENTER GARAGE

P

PARK CENTER
GARAGE

P

EDWARDS
CINEMA

CENTER TOWER

OCPAC STAFF
PARKING

OCPAC
LOADING DOCK

OCPAC

TOWN CENTER DRIVE

PARK CENTER DRIVE

THE SPA

SOUTH COAST
REPERTORY

WALKING TRAIL

ATTACHMENT 4

Planning Commission Minute Excerpt
November 10, 2003

TOWN CENTER DRIVE
MASTER PLAN

C.J. Segerstrom and Orange
County Performing Arts Center

The Chair opened the public hearing for consideration of the Town Center Drive Master Plan for future improvement of Town Center Drive between Park Center Drive and Avenue of the Arts. Environmental determination: Final EIR #1047.

Planning and Redevelopment Manager, R. Michael Robinson, reviewed the information in the staff report and gave a brief presentation of the plan characteristics. He recommended that the Planning Commission recommend to City Council, adoption of the Town Center Drive Master Plan.

Kerry Madden representing South Coast Plaza and the Orange County Performing Arts Center, said he was not at the meeting to add to the presentation but to thank the Commission for their consideration of what they believe to be a very important united arts campus concept, and additionally, to thank the City staff for their input and good work into the creation of the concept. He agreed to the conditions of approval.

In response to a question from the Chair regarding the time element in pursuing this plan, Mr. Madden explained that they are still in the process of raising funds for the Renee and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall. The master plan campaign would be a separate fund raising issue. He said fund raising is not in the wings at this time. Once approval has been granted, they will however, proceed.

No one else wished to speak and the Chair closed the public hearing.

MOTION:
Town Center Drive
Recommended Adoption

A motion was made by Commissioner Foley, seconded by Vice Chair Perkins and carried 5-0 to recommend to City Council of the Town Center Drive Master Plan, by adoption of Planning Commission Resolution PC-03-69, based on information and analysis in the Planning Division staff report, subject to conditions.

Mr. Robinson said this item would go to the City Council agenda of December 15, 2003.